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21069

COUNTRY: UK

SUBJECT: Reaction of Polish Emigre Press to Release
of Korean PW's

DATE 6 July 1953

PLACE ACQUIRED: -----
(by source)

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Supplement to:

Responsive to:

DATE (OF INFO): Late June 1953

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- 25X1X6 1. "The London Polish press has been and continues to be full of comment on the Korean situation. Sympathies are all with Rhee, [REDACTED] 25X1X6
- 25X1X6 [REDACTED] the same can be said of all Eastern Europeans. All believe that the powers acted immorally in 1938 in their treatment of the Czechs, and again in 1944 in the accords of Teheran and Yalta in their treatment of the Poles, and they know that repatriation of prisoners of war in Western Europe after the last war was a scandal, in violation of plainly stated agreements.
2. "They therefore have no confidence in the US and UK, and with India having the deciding voice in the repatriation of Korean and Chinese prisoners, they are convinced that a similar situation would develop in Korea. Communist pressure would be brought to bear in ways the outside world would never hear about. Of that they are convinced. They also are of the opinion that the US and the UK are always ready to sacrifice a small nation's rights if by so doing they can gain advantage.
3. "Thus Rhee has by his courageous action shown that 'for once a small country can defend itself when great nations are willing to forget solemnly taken obligations, or even deny them altogether.' Rhee has become the symbol of a small nation's resistance to the high-handed action of great and powerful governments.
4. "Americans, they note, have used every possible inducement to get soldiers in the North Korean army to desert and join the United Nations ranks. But when Rhee permits the escape of men forced against their will to join the Communist forces, and who would join the southern Koreans, he is violently attacked by United Nations governments, and by some speakers and writers branded a traitor. To quote one Polish editor: 'Syngman Rhee only did what the allies should have done long ago if they had used elementary common sense.' Why, asks this editor, were these Koreans not permitted to do what Poles and Czechs who had been compelled to fight in the German armies were allowed to do, namely desert and join the allies?

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5. "This Korean question is one in which the Koreans themselves are the most interested party. Decisions taken affect them vitally. They have an army of 600 thousand, they hold two-thirds of the fighting front. Yet they were not consulted, had no part in the negotiations, only the Americans negotiate with the Communist leaders, possibly after consultation with the British who have not 600 thousand but a few battalions.
6. "Referring again to Rhee being labelled a traitor, the comment is that the charge is not just, but if it were, it would be an agreeable change, that of a small nation committing an act of treachery against its powerful allies, instead of powerful allies betraying their small ally - something to which we have grown accustomed.
7. "It is certain that if we want the confidence of East Europeans we have got to do something to change present attitudes."

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